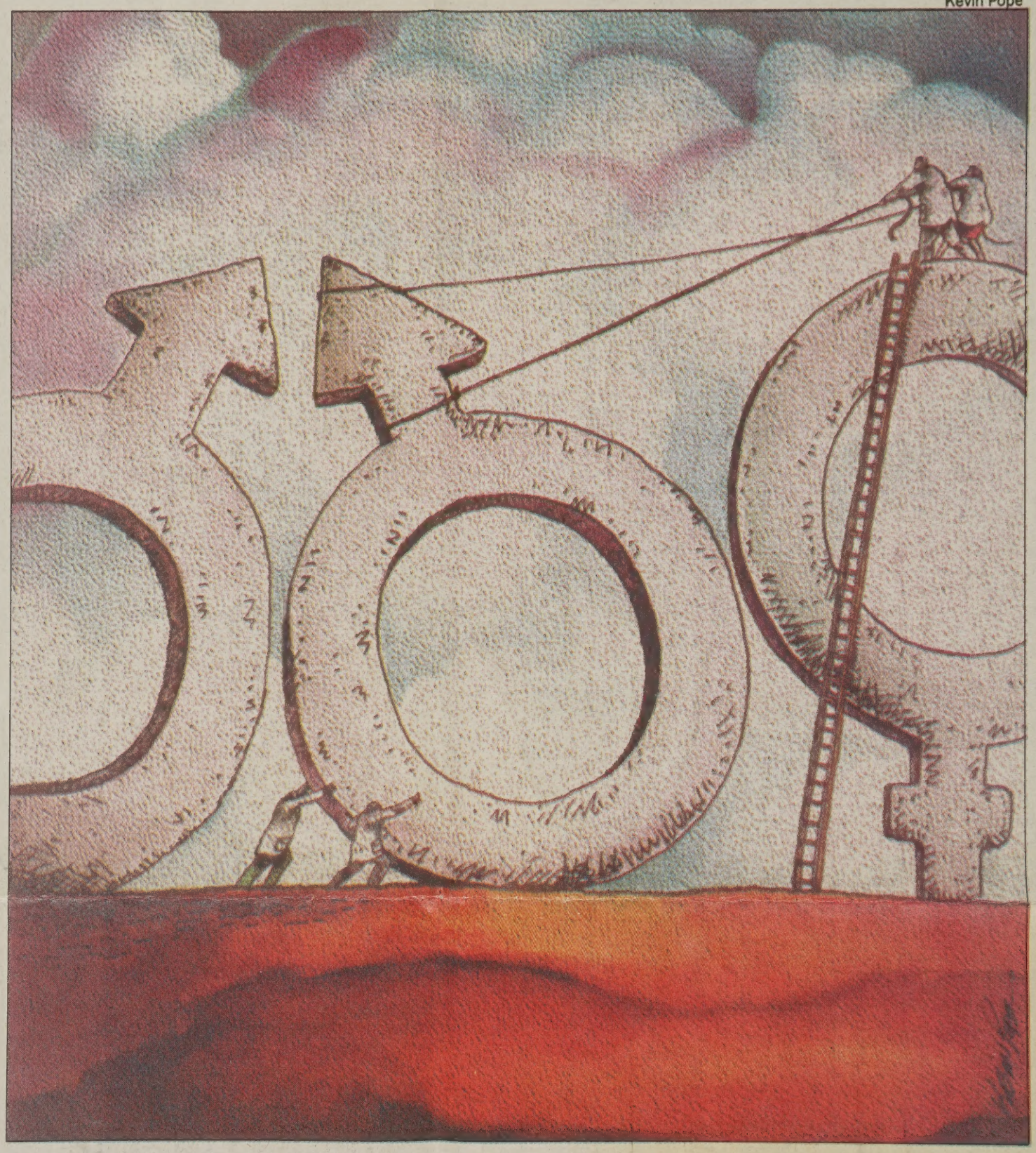
RELIGION

# Gay for life?

Mel White and Bob Davies were both raised to believe homosexuality is a sin — and both realized early on that they were gay. But now the two are on opposite sides of one of the most divisive issues of the day: whether gays and lesbians can change their sexual orientation.

Kevin Pope



By **Steve Rabey**
Religion Editor

Homosexuality is sinful.

In conservative Christian homes, that's the lesson children learn — and Bob Davies and Mel White heard it loud and clear as they were growing up, Davies in Vancouver, British Columbia, and White in Santa Cruz, Calif.

The lesson wasn't the only thing the two had in common. During their preteen years, both realized they were attracted to boys, not girls.

Both also sought relief from their shame through a long, difficult process of prayer, counseling and therapy designed to reconcile their sexuality with their faith — their bodies with their souls.

For Davies, the process resulted in a "recovery" from homosexuality. He has now been married to a woman for nine years and believes that, with God's help, all homosexuals can go straight.

"I have no doubt, based on my own life and the experiences of hundreds of people I know personally, that homosexuals can change," says Davies, author of "Coming Out of Homosexuality: New Freedom for Men & Women," and executive director of Exodus International, a San Rafael, Calif.-based ex-gay ministry.

But White, who spent decades and more than $100,000 on therapy, couldn't change his homosexual orientation, and is highly critical of ex-gay ministries such as Exodus.

"I was a victim of their false hope, and I almost ended up killing myself because I believed them," says White, who works for the Cathedral of Hope in Dallas, the nation's largest gay church, and is the author of "Stranger at the Gate: To Be Gay and Christian in America."

■ Events focus on whether gays can change/**E3**

Their tales illustrate the growing debate over whether gays can change their sexual orientation.

White and many gays who support gay rights believe that sexual orientation is not a matter of choice, but a result of genetics and other factors, and cannot be changed.

Davies and other religious opponents of gay rights believe that gays and lesbians freely choose their lifestyle, rebelling against biblical teaching that homosexuality is sinful. They say gays, like alcoholics, can turn to God for help in their recovery.

See **GAY**/E3

## INGS

**Aglow Fellowship,** Irene
l speak, "From New Age to
us," Satellite Hotel, Airport
cademy Boulevard, 9 a.m.
for breakfast, 578-8158,

**ional AIDS Candlelight**
**nd Mobilization Day,** Pikes
politan Community Church,
All Souls Unitarian Universalist
N. Tejon St., 5 p.m. Sun.,

**S. Full Moon Ritual,** All Souls
niversalist Church, 730 N.

**The Reverend James Southerland,** who has ministered in Russia during the past three years, will share his experiences at Immanuel Missionary Church, 2500 Busch Ave., 7:30 p.m. Tuesday; Pilgrim Holiness Church, 2924 Beacon St., 7:30 p.m. Wed.-Sat. May 28 and 7 p.m. Sun. May 29, 632-4449.

**Medicine Wheel Gathering,** ceremony involving the Inca creation story "The Sun Shed Tears of Joy," 10 a.m.-noon Sat. May 28, free, for information and location, 635-0532.

**Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International,** Valley Hi Country Club, 610 S. Chelton Road, 7:30 a.m. Sat. May 28, $5.50 breakfast, 592-0257.

Highway 83, 7 p.m. Tue. May 31, 685-1125.

**Academy Area Christian Women's Club,** "Hats Off to Ascott" Luncheon, Air Force Academy Officers' Club, noon-2 p.m. Thu. June 9, $8.75, reservations or cancellations by Mon. June 6, 592-1187.

## CLASSES/ WORKSHOPS

**The Women and Cars Seminar,** Pulpit Rock Church, 301 Austin Bluffs Parkway, 7 p.m. Tue. and Thu., 9 a.m. Sat. May 28, for reservations call Wheels of Hope Ministries, 634-2188.

**Divorce Recovery Workshop,** "Singing at Midnight — Dancing at Dawn," for the

reservations, 597-2520.

All events are free unless otherwise noted. The information deadline for Religion Calendar is 5 p.m. Tuesday. Photos will be used if space allows, and will be returned if submitted with a self-addressed stamped envelope. Items about regular services will not be published. Send information to Religion Calendar, Gazette Telegraph, P.O. Box 1779, Colorado Springs 80901.

## IGION NOTES

for the city's second an-
rch for Jesus."
organizer Jay Gary of
based Celebration 2000
event, which is part of
national Jesus march
nt, promotes Christian
d sets the stage for com-
ide evangelism.
ganizational meeting for
rch representatives will
0 a.m. May 28 at
Harvest Fellowship,
Montebello Square
r information on the
ll 636-2000.

**try representatives**
**Rwanda:** Two Colo-
ngs-based employees of
on International are in
o assess how the min-
ld respond to that
crisis.
nistry's work with
wandan children has
old since early April
al fighting forced the
15 Rwandan employ-
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Compassion has had
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s killed. In addition,
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found 12 Compassion-
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ar orphans.
sion representatives
rthern Rwanda from
nd are assessing the
of establishing relief
ound Ruhengeri, in the
rthern part of the
elief workers estimate
than 100,000 Rwan-
gathered in the north,
violence that has
e capital city of Kigali
arts of the country.

**Guides offer help on death, divorce:** Answering Life's Challenges, a Colorado Springs-based nonprofit group, has published two directories of information on support groups, counselors and resources. One directory is for people who have suffered the death of a loved one. The other is for people recovering from divorce.

The two "Healing After Loss" directories include listings of local and national agencies, articles and a listing of books and resources from Protestant, Catholic and Jewish sources.

The directories cost $2.50, with discounts for 11 or more copies, and can be purchased by calling 593-0957.

**Ministry broadcasts in Romania:** HCJB World Radio began broadcasts of Christian programs in Bucharest, Romania, in April and will expand to other Romanian cities soon.

Compiled by Steve Rabey

## Minister appeals harassment judgment

Associated Press

DENVER — A Denver United Methodist minister has appealed a Denver district court judgment, awarding $68,000 to a female member of his congregation who claimed he sexually harassed her.

The regional denominational headquarters, the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference — a co-defendant in the suit who was ordered to pay the woman $129,000 — also is appealing the ruling.

The Rev. Glenn Chambers, who is on indefinite disability leave while he undergoes psychiatric counseling and treatment for alcoholism, has denied harassing the woman. Chambers was senior pastor of Grace United Methodist Church at the time of the alleged harassment.

Following a January trial in Judge John McMullen's courtroom, a jury determined the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference had breached its fiduciary duty, had not adequately supervised Chambers and had allowed "extreme and outrageous conduct."

In the appeal, conference attorney Neil Quigley cites the First Amendment to the Constitution, saying its guarantee of free exercise of religion bans the state from directing how churches should hire or supervise their clergy.

The jury should have been advised that Chambers was not under the direct supervision of the conference, Quigley added.

## CORRECTION

Bill Gates is the founder and chairman of Microsoft Corp. A Knight-Ridder Newspapers story in Thursday's Lifestyle section provided incorrect information about Gates.


**FRIENDSHI BAPTIST CHURCH**
633 E. Dale
719/473-8186
8:00 & 10:50 AM
Sunday Worship Servic
9:30 AM
Sunday School & Nurse
7:00 PM
Wednesday Prayer Meeting/Bi
SANDY R. FIELDS, PAS

**RADIAN CHURC**
**Assembly of**
Service Schedu
SUNDAY
Worship ....8
Sunday School ....10
Worship ....11
Evening Praise....6
WEDNESDAY
Family Night....7
4020 E. Maizelan
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*LY OF CHRIST*
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Sunday School at 9:40
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**Church**
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# MINISTRY CENTRA

*Your Guide to the Springs Religious Communit*

## CHURCHES

1. **Academy Christian Ch.**
**Hwy. 83 & Old Ranch Rd.**
**599-0476**
Sun. Sch. 9:45 am, Celebration Service 8:30 am
Second Worship 10:45 am
Evening Service & Youth Group 6:30 pm

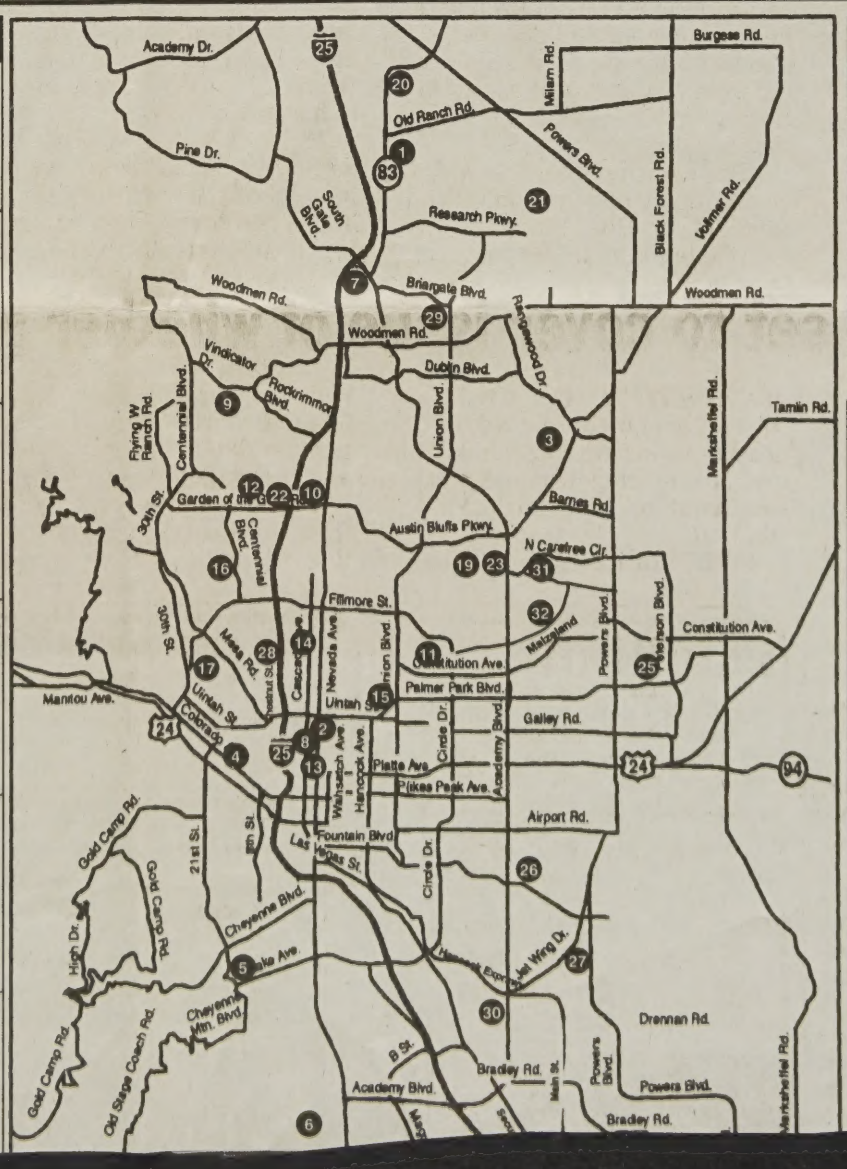
2. **All Souls Unitarian**
**730 N. Tejon 633-7717**
Sun. Sch. 9 & 11 am
Adult Forum 10:10 am
Worship 9 & 11:15 am

3. **Austin Bluffs Assembly**
**5090 Austin Bluffs Parkway**
**598-0424**
Sun. Sch. & Worship 9 & 10:40 am
Sunday evening Worship 6:30 pm
Wednesday Family Night 7 pm

4. **Bethany Baptist ABC Affiliate**
**1930 W. Colorado Ave**
**634-7232**
Sun. Sch. 9:30 am
Worship 10:45 am
Wed Bible Study 6:30 pm
Nursery Provided

5. **Chapel of Our Saviour • Episcopal**
**4th & Polo Dr.**
**633-2667**
Eucharist: Sun 7:30, 10:00 am
Sun. Sch. 9 am Youth Group 6:30 pm

6. **Cheyenne Mountain Fellowship**
**Meets at Cheyenne Mtn. Elementary**
**5250 Farthing Drive**
**386-0332**




## GRACE FELLOWSHIP C

**Grace Fellowship Church** is a church with an emphasis upon foundational teaching of God's Word personal growth, and world missio contemporary Praise and Worship array of additional ministries opportunity for spiritual growth. S include Children's Ministry, Yo Drama, Puppets, TV ministry, Mus Current plans include the future co new worship facility on the east side

We invite you to join us at **Grac Church** for lively praise and worshi teaching in a contemporary setting.

23. **Pikes Peak Church Religious Science**
**3685 Jeannine Dr.**
**596-6894**
Sun. Services 9:30 & 1

24. **Restoration Church, Assembly of God**
**390-9594**
Meets at Janitell Jr. High Su
7635 Fountain Mesa Rd.
Wed. Family Activities 7:0
Fountain Valley Sr. Ctr.

25. **Restoration Fellow Foursquare**
**Meets at Horizon Midd**
**1750 Piros Dr.**
**596-2989**
Sun. Fellowship 9 am, Celeb

26. **Springs First Churc of the Nazarene**
**4120 Fountain Blvd.**
**596-5119**

TRENDS

DESIGNED FOR THE

# THIRD MILLENNIUM

**The look for the future is classic — with clean lines and an emphasis on comfort, function**

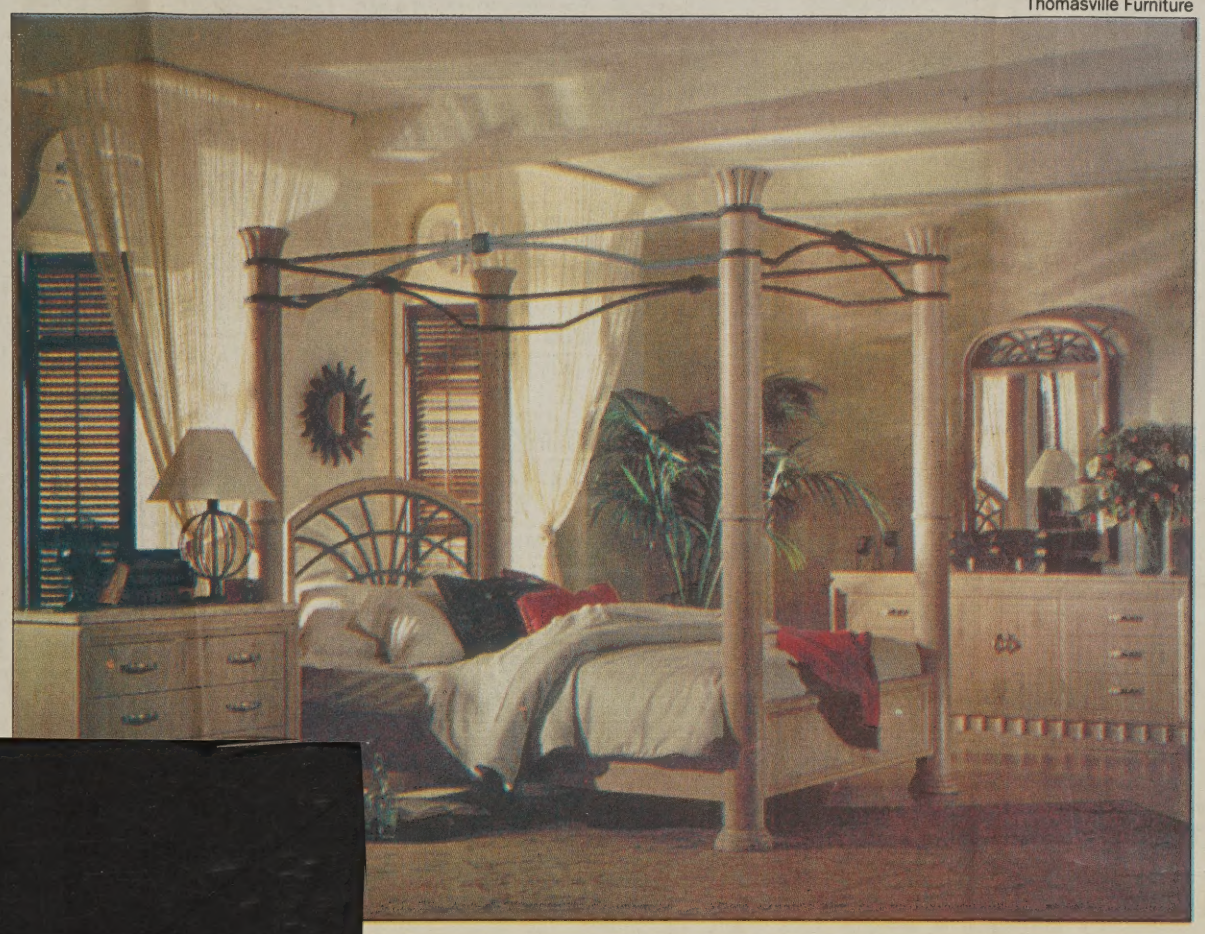
By **Linda Bennett**

HIGH POINT, N.C. — Identifying a single, definitive style direction for home furnishings in this last decade of the 20th century is like trying to pin a name tag on a shadow.

But designers and manufacturers showcased at the recent International Home Furnishings Market in High Point, N.C., tried, offering new furniture and decorative accessories in styles that ranged from casual country to formal neoclassic.

And in their race to define a signature look that might carry over to the next millennium, tastemakers also revisited sev-

Thomasville Furniture



Baker Furniture

ABOVE:
**This four-poster with strong architectural lines is part of Thomasville's Stone Terrace collection.**
LEFT:
**This distinctive tapering chest of drawers is from the Parish-Hadley collection for Baker Furniture.**

BELOW:

## SOURCES

**For information on where furniture mentioned in this story might be sold, contact:**

- Baker Furniture (Milling Road), 1661 Monroe Ave. N.W., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49505; (616) 361-7321.
- Benchcraft, P.O. Box 86, Blue Mountain, Miss. 38610. (601) 685-4711.
- Bernhardt Furniture Co., P.O. Box 740, Lenoir, N.C. 28645. (704) 758-9811.
- Broyhill Furniture Industries, One Broyhill Park, Lenoir, N.C. 28633; (704) 328-1851.
- Drexel Heritage Furnishings, 101 N. Main St., Drexel, N.C. 28619. (704) 433-3000.
- Henredon Furniture Industries (Ralph Lauren), P.O. Box 70, Morganton, N.C. 28680. (704) 437-5261.
- Hickory Chair Co. (div. of Lane), P.O. Box 2147, Hickory, N.C. 28603. (704) 328-1801.
- Highland House, P.O. Box 2467, Hickory, N.C. 28603. (704) 323-8600.
- The Lane Co., P.O. Box 151, Altavista, Va. 24517. (804) 369-5641.
- Lexington Furniture Industries, P.O. Box 1008, Lexington, N.C. 27292. (704) 249-5300.
- Lineage Home Furnishings, 4000 Lineage Court, High Point, N.C. 27265. (910) 454-6688.
- Marbro, P.O. Box 1769, Holland, Mich. 49422. (616) 392-1473.
- Mitchell Gold's Deign Line Ltd., Route 7, P.O. Box 544-4, Taylorsville, N.C. 28681. (704) 635-0081.
- Pearson Co. (div. of Lane), P.O. Box 2838, High Point, N.C. 27261. (910) 882-8135.
- Thayer Coggin, P.O. Box 5867, High Point, N.C. 27262. (910) 841-6000.
- Thomasville Furniture Industries, P.O. Box 339, Thomasville, N.C. 27361. (910) 472-4000.
- Universal Furniture Industries, 2622 [illegible]ad, High Point, N.C. 27263. [illegible]200.

Lexington Furniture

# Gay/Ministries' intervention programs don't work for all

From E1

## BOB DAVIES: Five years in ministry helped change behavior

Bob Davies, 43, grew up knowing he was attracted to boys.

"When I was growing up, I never felt like one of the guys," he says. "In school I was the guy everybody picked on. I was very uncoordinated. And I got a lot of rejection from the other little boys.

"I retreated into the world of little girls and women. And I had identified with girls so strongly that when I hit puberty, I began to be attracted to boys just like a girl would."

But it wasn't until he was 14 that he discovered the word "homosexuality" in a Christian book on sex written for teens. The discovery shocked him.

"I was horrified," he recalls. "And I immediately decided I would never tell anybody about my discovery. And I began to pray that these feelings would go away. Unfortunately, the feelings did not go away."

By the time he was 18, Davies' anxiety about his homosexual tendencies had made him a recluse.

"I was deathly afraid people would find out my secret, so basically I withdrew from everybody, quit going to church and withdrew into my studies."

The next year, in 1969, Davies went to the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, where he became aware of the presence of the gay subculture.

"I realized there were a large number of other men with the same feelings, and I found that really intriguing," he says. "I would memorize the locations of gay bars, and when I went past them on a bus, I would always look to see if anyone was going in or out of the front door."

Davies' strict religious upbringing prevented him from going to the bars and having sex with other men, a fact that he now is thankful for. "I was like an outsider looking in," he says.

Instead, he sought relief in a fantasy world of gay pornography and masturbation — but was still unsettled by what he was doing.

Davies left the university to attend Prairie Bible College in Alberta, where he sought healing from his homosexuality through a deeper commitment to follow biblical teachings.

He also tried to talk to his pastor, but it didn't help.

"He was a nice guy and he gave it his best shot, but he had no clue," says Davies.

The homosexual feelings continued, and Davies feared that unless he overcame them, they would overtake him. So he decided to spend the summer of 1979 with a pioneering San Francisco-based ministry, Love In Action. The ministry claims that half of the people who go through its live-in program of support groups, Bible study, and rigorous church involvement emerge with significantly diminished same-sex attractions and remain free of homosexual behavior forever.

The summer turned into five years, as Davies discovered that altering his sexual orientation was more difficult than he thought.

In 1984, he left the program, his homosexual tendencies significantly under control. He became involved in a church where he met a woman who knew about his struggle with his sexual identity, and supported him through it. In 1985, they were married.

"For me, the issue was not changing my orientation, but obedience to God," says Davies.

"I believed with deepest conviction that homosexuality was wrong. God had said that, and it was up to me to make a choice of whether I was going to obey him or not.

Davies says his healing from homosexuality is real, but not perfect. Like a recovering alcoholic, he says he'll always have to deal with his urges.

"It's really important for people in Exodus to be honest with the world and not present a picture that we are perfect and never ever have any struggles with our past," he says, "because virtually all of us have some level of residue from our past we have to deal with."

Mel White

**Mel White, right, shown with Gary Nixon — his partner of nine years — believes his homosexuality came from God and that his mission is to battle for the acceptance of gay and lesbian people.**

Exodus International

**Pam and Bob Davies married in 1984 after he had spent five years with Love In Action, a ministry dedicated to altering same-sex attractions through support groups, Bible study and church involvement.**

## MEL WHITE: Says his homosexuality is a gift from God

When Mel White makes his case that gays can't change, his prime exhibit is his own life.

For nearly three decades, White, who was raised in the Anderson, Ind.-based Church of God, found success as a church pastor, a seminary professor, a producer of 53 Christian films and television documentaries, an author of 16 books, and a ghostwriter for some of the biggest names in Christendom.

Meanwhile, he was engaged in a secret internal battle to rid himself of his homosexuality, and was undergoing a battery of therapies involving electric shock, prayer and fasting, and exorcisms of evil spirits.

He also made dozens of trips down the church aisle to the altar, where he repeatedly confessed his homosexual desires to God.

When White first learned of the existence of ex-gay ministries, he sought their help and gave them his financial support.

And while he still believes that such ministries may be able to help people who are sexually confused, he believes that God makes some people heterosexual and others homosexual, and there's nothing they can do to change it.

"These groups use a handful of cases to substantiate something that is being held up to millions of us as true, and they are holding up a false hope," says White, 53.

"There are hundreds and thousands of us who have tried it. I don't care how sincere they are. They are sincerely wrong."

White grew up in a committed Christian home, where prayer, Bible reading and sharing the faith were everyday occurrences. His grandmother was an itinerant evangelist.

But at age 13, when he first became aware of his homosexual stirrings, he built a thick wall of secrecy around that part of his life.

"In the closet, I learned two things necessary for the survival of a typical gay adolescent," he says. "First, pretend that you like girls. And second, don't let anyone know that you really like boys."

White concealed his conflicts under a swirl of activity. And when he married Lyla Lee Loehr in 1962, it was out of a combination of love, fear and a hope that he could adapt to a heterosexual life.

Shortly after their marriage, White told his wife about his homosexual urges, confident that the couple could overcome them. But he says he had to think about men while having sex with his wife.

"I was married for 25 years, and Lyla and I worked so hard, but it was so unnatural for me to have sex with a woman," he says. "What is natural to me is to make love to a man, and to do it carefully and lovingly and with integrity."

In 1985, White began a relationship with Gary Nixon, who is still his partner. Mel and Lyla were separated in 1985 and divorced in 1990.

Lyla has come to accept Mel's orientation, and in her introduction to his book she wrote, "Mel had no choice about being a homosexual."

White now believes that his homosexuality is a gift from God. And he sees himself as a soldier in the battle for acceptance of gay and lesbian people.

"Spiritual renewal is the next step for the gay and lesbian movement," says White, who like many other homosexuals, has found fellowship in the Metropolitan Community Churches.

"We've all been thrown out of all the (other) churches," he says.

"But here there is grace. The soft, warm hand of grace is here to greet you. And we have to say, wherever you are, Jesus loves you and we love you and we want to be here to protect your soul as you find renewal."

# Presentations set to cover issue of whether gays can change

By **Steve Rabey**
Gazette Telegraph

Bob Davies, Mel White and others involved in the debate over whether gays can change will speak in Colorado during the next month. Here are some of the events:

■ Mel White will speak in Denver Friday evening at the kickoff banquet for the district conference of the Metropolitan Community Church. The banquet is sold out, but afterward White will lead a pro-gay march to the state Capitol. The march will start at the Warwick Hotel, 1776 Grand Ave.

■ Exodus International's 19th Annual North American Conference for ex-gays and others who want to work with gays will be June 26-July 2 in Fort Collins. Speakers include two Colorado Springs residents, Robert McGee, founder of a chain of Christian psychiatric units, and Dr. Harry Schaumburg, a counselor. Also speaking will be Bob Davies, Joseph Nicolosi, an Encino, Calif.-based psychologist whose program on changing homosexual orientation was the subject of a three-day broadcast on Focus on the Family in April. Workshops cover dating, parenting, depression, sexual addiction, alternative treatments for AIDS/HIV, pornography, and "Answering the Pro-Gay Christian Movement."

Registration is $250 for the full conference, or $475-$550 with lodging. Daily registration is $65. For information, call Exodus, (415) 454-1017.

■ Where Grace Abounds, a Denver-based ministry affiliated with Exodus, will sponsor a Christian leaders luncheon, "Homosexuality: How Should the Church Respond?" in Fort Collins June 29. The event will feature a panel including Kevin Tebedo of Colorado for Family Values, Joseph Nicolosi, and Mary Heathman of Where Grace Abounds.

■ PBS stations nationwide will air "One Nation Under God," a controversial documentary on Exodus International and the ex-gay movement.

The 83-minute program profiles Exodus founders Michael Bussey and Gary Cooper, who left the ministry after falling in love with each other; they were later married.

KRMA Channel 6 will air the show at 9 p.m. June 15. KTSC Channels 8 and 14 will air the show at 8 p.m. June 29.